

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES  
of  
ZINA ANN MULESTEIN, REISKE, SELMAN, IVERSON  
and  
LAZELL CHRISTIAN (JACK) IVERSON

Compiled by  
Peggy Hancock Philbrick

ZINA ANN MUHLESTEIN, RIESKE, SELMAN, IVERSON

I was born December 6, 1901 in Provo, Utah. My father was John Nicholas Muhlestein, and my mother was Martha Josephine Liechty. My parents were born in Provo, but my grandparents Nicholes Muhlestein and his wife Mary (Maria) Hauenstein; and Johannes Liechty and his wife Louisa Wintsch came from Switzerland. They were good friends in Switzerland and chummed together. They heard the gospel and joined the Church. They came to America together. During their voyage across the ocean grandmother Mary Hauenstein Muhlestein lost two children, both were buried in the ocean. They crossed the plains with the pioneers and settled in Provo, Utah. They loved the mountains, so they both homesteaded a flat piece of ground at the base of the "Y" mountain, and called it wolf flat. My mother and father were both raised there. When my mother was born my father was 14 years old. She was a beautiful baby with lovely black hair. When my father first held her in his arms he said, "I'm going to marry her." As soon as she was 18 years old they were married in the Salt Lake Temple.

My mother had 12 children. Her first child, a girl named Louisa Mary, was born January 19, 1898 and died the very same day. Then came John Wilford my older brother. He was born June 1, 1900. I was the third child and the only girl for some time. I think I got a little bit spoiled. Then Albert was born September 24, 1903. George was born March 15, 1905. My mother had a little girl next named Martha, who was born March 13, 1907 and died March 1, 1908.

She was a year old and I was in school for my second year when she got pneumonia and died. I had to stay out of school and tend the other children. I loved that little sister. I already had three brothers and wanted a sister. Roy Casper was born on September 5, 1909; Leah was born on August 5, 1911; then Edith February 3, 1913; Josephine March 8, 1916; Sterling Reed September 5, 1917, and Florence July 30, 1921.

There was plenty of work to do with a big family. It seemed like I was always tending babies, washing diapers, washing dishes, sweeping floors, and making beds. It wasn't until I was about ready to be married that I had a sister old enough to help with the housework. We washed clothes on a washboard. My dad finally bought a washing machine, so all we had to do was run it. That was lots better, but even that was tiresome. When I wasn't in the house helping I was picking strawberries or raspberries on the farm.

I started school with my brother Wilford September 1907. We went to the Page School that still stands across the road from the Brigham Young University stadium. We had to walk a mile and a half to school. At home they all talked Swiss or German. We older ones talked with our folks in Swiss until we started to school and had to learn more English. We had quite a time at first. Anyway we didn't get promoted, and took kindergarten over the next year. Actually I was in the group I was supposed to be in because the girls my age were all in next years class, so I didn't feel put out. I think it helped us.

My father's uncle Joseph Erin Muhlestein built a house not far from our place. He had a daughter just a year younger than I. Lucy and I became good friends and we had a lot of fun together. She had a sister about 5 years older, Margaret (we called her Margie), she was our entertainer. I and my three brothers and Leah my sister would go over to their place and Margie would put on shows and circuses. With Lucy and her brothers there was a little crowd of us. One year the boys found a blow snake and they brought it to her, and she put on a show playing with the snake. I was about 12 years old at that time. My uncle Brigham Liechty, my mother's brother, built a house just across the street from us. The Muhlesteins bought land together, they were good friends as well. My grandpa Nicholas Muhlestein married a second wife. The second wife Anna Wintsch was a sister to my grandmother Louisa Wintsch. We were like one great big family living together there so close with no other neighbors.

Albert and George were regular Indians playing and herding cows in the hills above our home. We also had a pond that had lots of polliwogs in it, and the boys had lots of fun catching them. We kids were just like jack rabbits running up and down the hills. We always went up to grandma Muhlestein's on Sunday because they always had ice cream. Grandma and Grandpa Liechty were neighbors too. They both lived in homes on wolf flats which is right above where the Provo Temple is today. We got to see both grandparents, and aunts and uncles. Grandmother Liechty had two daughters, Rose and Elizabeth, and two sons, Ephraim and Jesias living at home. They lived with grandma and grandpa and took care of them until they died. Grandpa Liechty had a



donkey and used to let us ride it. That was where I rode my first horse and learned to ride.

I was baptized on a hot summer day, July 31, 1910, in the Provo River by Wilford Stubbs. I was confirmed a member of the Church the same day by Thaddeus Cluff.

Wilford and I walked to the Page School for ten years. I graduated from the eighth grade May 1916 when I was 15 years old. That summer the folks wanted to go up the canyons for a vacation. We hitched up the team and wagon, put some straw and blankets in the wagon box, fixed some food, and went up to camp for a few days. Our neighbors Samuel and Babette Reiske who lived about a mile and a half from us had a ranch up the canyon. One of their sons, Samuel Rieske Jr., was a good looking boy, and about five years older than I. I kinda fell for him a little bit. I was so shy and my mother wanted me to make an impression with him, and get him to pay me some attention. Sam was sitting and resting, my mother got some water and sneaked up and threw it on him, she then blamed me for it. That's how my mother got us acquainted, and I met my future husband. We had a good time. It was a nice vacation.

I experienced a special testimony building incident (among many) that stands out in my memory. It happened when I was about 16. My cousin Lucy and I had driven several miles to the city one Saturday evening to do some shopping. I had forgotten to take a rope along, so in trying to tie the horse to the hitching post with the bridle rein, the horse became frightened and jerked backwards breaking the bridle into pieces. I quickly caught the horse and threw the line around its neck to keep it from wrecking the buggy. Not knowing just how we could get home or what to do, I offered up a silent prayer for guidance.

Immediately I thought about some friends that lived three blocks away who had a horse and buggy. My cousin went to their house and borrowed a bridle while I stayed and held onto the horse. We put the bridle on and got home safely.

That next fall I started school at the B.Y.U. The flu came and the school closed until February. That ended our schooling for that year. The next year our family got the flu in January and mother ended up with a bad heart so that ended school for me again. I had to stay home and take care of the family. I started school again the next fall and went until March.

In the meantime, after the camping trip, Sam and I started going together. I was about 16. We didn't get to go out very often, because he and his brothers had a ranch in the canyons and he had to take his turn. If he came down twice a month, that was great. We would go to the show or once in a while a ward dance. He never did learn how to dance real well. One time on the 24th of July we had a good outing at Saltaire resort going on all the rides, especially the big wheel. Sam didn't have time to sport much, because his older brother never stayed up at the ranch much, which made Sam the oldest and in charge. The other brothers would get mad and run away, so he was the one that had to be there.

1921 It was in the beginning of the year 1921 when we finally decided to get married in June. So I didn't finish that year in school either. We were married at my folks home, June 15, 1921, by Bishop E.B. Walker. Our first home was on the ranch in Provo Canyon. Just a little below where the Deer Creek Reservoir is. When I got up there the house was full of laborers, three fellows who helped with the hay and a deaf man, his wife and children who were fixing up the house. I had quite a mess



at first. When we got it finished, the house looked nice. We didn't do much chasing, we were too busy. We had a good life together. Our first baby girl was named Zina Dorothy. She was born May 1, 1922, at my folks home in Provo. We didn't get to church because we were too far away. When we had the baby we just had to go that Sunday to get a name for her. We had plenty to do and always had a hired man or two, especially in the summer. In the winter we would have one hired man, so we were never alone. We didn't have a washer. I had to wash our clothes on the washboard. We enjoyed it up there. I enjoyed the river and the trains coming by twice a day, and the baby.

Our second baby, a boy, was born September 15, 1923, also at my parents home. We named him John Samuel Rieske. He was the apple of his father's eye. His father wanted to get him some overalls before he could stand up. When the baby was about 2 weeks old I had to leave my mother's and go home, because the thrashers were coming. When I got home I cooked for the thrashers. It was a job tending the baby and cooking. I was all petered out by the time the thrashing was over. We went along as usual and didn't do anything special. We had a phonograph we played every so often if we wanted some music. Sam liked to read so when the days work was done we would both sit down and read. We both quite enjoyed that. We would go to the show once in a while.

We wanted to go to a show one Saturday night and Dorothy was about three years old. She went to sleep before we left, so we thought we would just leave her. So we left her and just took John, he was just a baby. I've never spent such a miserable night in my whole life. Up to Heber at the show I worried all night about leaving her, and I made up my mind I would never do

that again. On the way home, just about one mile from our house we could see a big fire. I thought, Oh dear, my house is on fire. It just about scared me to death. We went around the bend and there was a car on fire. We had to stop and wait until the fire was out before we could get by. When we got home and Dorothy was all right I was very thankful. I got down on my knees and thanked my Heavenly Father for taking care of her while we were gone. I said I'd never, never do that again and I didn't, that was enough for me.

Our third child was also born at mother's home, January 4, 1927. We named her Beverly Jean. She was a happy baby. By that time Sam was more free with the little ones and he fussed over her quite a bit.

\*→ The year 1927 was a tragic one for our little family. It happened July 30, 1927 when Sam fell in the barn they were building. He was fixing a hay fork for unloading hay, up in the rafters, when he fell on a saw horse. The men came running down to the house and said, "Call the doctor, Sam fell and he's unconscious." I ran up to the barn where he lay and held him. The doctor came down from Heber and checked him. He pricked his toes and he didn't react. The doctor said he was totally paralyzed. We brought him down to the Provo hospital. I left the baby and the children with my mother and father and I stayed at the hospital. They finally chased us out of the hospital, and told us we could come back in the morning. When I went back in the morning he was still alive but had never regained consciousness. I was there less than one hour and he passed away on July 30, 1927. It was a blessing because he was paralyzed. It was awful, three little children to take care of, and the ranch too. That was the end of me and the ranch. His brother, Walt,



took over the ranch and I went to my folk's to live. I couldn't stand to go back up. I only went once to get my furniture.

I stayed with my folks for half a year or so. I started looking for a place and ran across an old two story apartment building at 187 North and 2nd East in Provo. It had two apartments. I bought it for \$3,500. I had received insurance money and they sold the house for about \$4,000. I lived in one side of the apartment building and rented the other side. That is how we got along. In between times I would go help the neighbors houseclean, scrub floors and wash windows, etc. I had my sister Leah come down and stay with the children while I went working. I received a little insurance money monthly and some money from the county. I lived there scrounging around trying to earn all I could to help us along. The folks tried to help us too. We didn't live in luxury, but we didn't starve either. Dorothy and John were both in school and time went on. After a few years I was almost ready to get married to some guy, but he turned out not to be so hot, so I didn't.

I decided to go to college. In 1930 I attended Henagers Business College in Salt Lake so I could learn type and shorthand and get an office job. Mother and dad took care of the children. I found a job working for a Captain Dix and his daughter who lived at Fort Douglas. I cooked them breakfast and dinner during the week and dinner on Saturday and Sunday, plus I kept the house up. That went on from July to November. I was really homesick and I felt bad my parents were working their heads off trying to take care of my three children, two of them going to school. I thought, Oh I can't do that to them, I just can't. My mother wasn't well and I wasn't so anxious to be working in Salt Lake

anyway. The Captain wanted me to stay for Thanksgiving and cook dinner for them. I told them no, that I needed to be with my family for Thanksgiving. They didn't like that and said they would get someone who would stay. I told the Captain that was alright with me. They did find a woman who would stay for Thanksgiving, so I quit and came home. That was the end of my formal education.

I moved back to my apartment in Provo and took the children with me. That spring Dorothy and John were going to school. John hadn't been too well all winter. He took real sick in the spring and had to quit school. He had such a high fever. The doctor came but he couldn't find out what was wrong. John finally got over it and was alright. He missed near a whole year of school, so John had to take the class over again. Beverly, the poor little thing, didn't get much mothering, because I was gone so much of the time. I finally decided, Oh, Pooh, I'll stay home and take care of the children. That summer I helped the folks quite a bit picking strawberries.

I met George Selman and his wife Ellatheria McEwan when I went and picked strawberries for him a few summers. He and his wife had gone to Salt Lake taking a load of fruit to the market. On their way home they were almost at the point of the mountain when a car came from the back and hit the end of their truck and tipped it over. It fell on his wife and killed her. So that left him alone too. Time went on and of course we knew each other. About a couple of years after his wife had passed away, he came and asked if I would go with him to the show. I felt sorry for him, he was so lonely and so broken up losing his wife. He had six children. He had older daughters who took care of the house. It went on and one day he asked me if I would marry him. I said, "I don't know whether I could or not." That was about four years after my husband was killed. So, he kept after me and kept asking

me to go places. So finally I had to marry him to get rid of him. He was a nice, kind and good man. I was married to George V. Selman, February 26, 1931, in the Salt Lake Temple. Also, at this time I was sealed to Samuel. George stood in as proxy. That was a soul searching day. Selvoy G. Boyer, a Temple worker, did the ceremony.

The children and I moved over to George's place in Orem. My family was really enlarged. George had seven children and I had three. It wasn't so bad because two of his daughters were married, Cleah and Naomi. Four days after we were married, Cleah gave birth to a baby girl they named Marilyn. I helped with the delivery and became a grandmother four days after I was married. Naomi had a baby girl on June 30th the same year, they named her Joyce. He had a nice little home with two bedrooms in the basement and two bedrooms upstairs. He had two boys at home, Orrin McEwan and Vernon Mormon; and three girls Thelma, Evelyn, and Leona. So, I had plenty of help. We had a house full but we got along. George and his children were good to me and my little ones.

A year later, July 17, 1932, I had a baby boy and we called him Delon. He had plenty of attention. The girls all wanted to tend him. I let the girls do all the work and I kept care of the baby. I tried to fix the home up and keep it nice. I had plenty of help cooking. Thelma liked to cook, so we let her cook as much as she wanted to. The girls were popular girls in the ward, and they had plenty of boyfriends. George and I went off together places quite often and left the other girls to tend the little ones. The girls and I never had any bad words between us. Once in a while when George saw something he didn't like, he would get after them, but I never had any trouble.

We always had a big strawberry and raspberry patch. When



the strawberries got ripe, we were busy. After the strawberries we picked raspberries up until school started.

George and I lived together for over thirty years. We had a good life together. We traveled together extensively visiting with the married children. We have been in thirty states and Mexico and Canada. He died April 25, 1963 of leukemia and heart trouble. All of my children were married and gone, and I was alone again.

Earlier in 1954 I went to work for the School Lunch Program. There were twelve of us who cooked at the senior high school. We served around 1200 students lunch. I enjoyed that job. It gave me something to do and I would get home around two in the afternoon, then I could do my work at home. One day one of the women I worked with came in and said, "Zina, I've got a boyfriend for you." I said, "I don't want a boyfriend." She said, "Well, he's a really nice guy, I'll send him over." The next Sunday the phone rang and it was Jack Iverson. He came over and that's how we met.

Time went on and Jack and I chased together. He was good company. I'd made up my mind I wasn't going to get married anymore. However, on May 26, 1967, I married Jack Iverson. I moved to his place in American Fork and rented my home and then sold it. Jack and I worked in the Salt Lake and Provo Temple for thirteen years until Jack's health couldn't take it anymore. We have been married now over 16 years. Besides working at the Temple we have traveled some.

In July 1980, we had a family reunion with my brothers and sisters, and their families at my brother George's place in Charleston, Utah. We had a good attendance and a good time. My family is so scattered that it is hard to get them all together.

Dorothy and Bill live in Salt Lake City; John and Elaine live in Columbus, Ohio; Beverly and Kent are in Los Altos, California; and Delon and Frances live in Fullerton, California. The married grandchildren are really scattered.

The day after Christmas 1980 wasn't so happy as our brother Wilford passed away December 26, 1980, and was buried on the 30th. He had a heart attack. His family asked me to give a short history and stories about the things we did when we were children. His wife Inez preceded him in death the year before. Death has surely visited us lately. Our sister Josephine died in November 1980, just a month before Wilford left us. It surely was a sad month. Two years later my brother Albert passed away March 7, 1982 of a heart attack. He was buried in Orem, Utah beside his wife Nola. Our loved ones are going away quite often it seems.

The girls planned an Open House for my 80th birthday. It was held in our chapel in American Fork on November 28, 1981. They had to plan it early as my birthday was on Sunday, December 6th. I tried to talk them out of it, but they insisted. Beverly and Kent and Delon and Frances came up for the affair. The Open House in honor of my 80th birthday was great. Dorothy, Leona, Naomi and the others really worked hard to see that everything worked out fine. It was so nice to greet lots of my old friends from Orem I hadn't seen for years. The family was there in goodly numbers. John and Elaine were the only ones of my children that couldn't make it. The family gave me a scrapbook that everyone signed and wrote notes to me. The great grandchildren had lots of fun writing their names in it. It surely is precious to me because of the notes and also the pictures. Kent spent the evening trying to catch everyone that came in to take their picture. He sent me the pictures for Christmas. He



and Beverly are so good to us. All the children are good to us. Everyone of them try to find something they can do to help us out. They are always asking what they can do to help. Naomi and Percy are great to take us on trips and for rides. Dorothy and her children are helping whenever they can. Leona and Lloyd are real good to us as well. John, Delon and Orrin and their wives are always anxious to help. Evelyn and her new husband would do anything for us. How blessed we are to have such wonderful children and grandchildren.

I have held positions in all the auxiliary organizations in the Church. When I was thirteen I taught Primary. In the spring of 1931 I was appointed a counselor in the Relief Society with Sarah Park, president and Phyllis Hancock as the other counselor. I held this position for about a year in the Sharon Ward. In August 1938, I was appointed Young Women M.I.A. president. I served about three years with superintendents Morley Vernon, Rudolph Wolfgram and Lyle McDonald in Sharon ward. I was on the stake M.I.A. presidency two years. I served again as Relief Society counselor with Verna Holt as president and Letha Bergener as the other counselor in the Vermont Ward. In 1949, I was put in as Relief Society president in the Vermont Ward under bishop Arch Pulham, then Reed Bergener. The ward was divided and I became the first president of the Relief Society in the Orem First Ward under Bishop Allan D. Johnson, and then Donald Wilcox. I served five years. In building our chapel, I turned over the first shovel full of dirt over the Relief Society room in the ground breaking ceremony. In 1954 I was appointed as a class leader on the Sunday School Stake Board serving under Lee R. Ross as superintendent, and then under Dexter Wilbert. This position I held for 7 years. In 1962 I was a Sunday School Teacher, and



in 1963 ward librarian. I was set apart as a stake missionary November 27, 1963, by President M. Dover Hunt. My partner and myself had the privilege of helping five people accept the gospel and be baptized. This occurred March 1965.

All my life I've known there's a Heavenly Father and I've tried all my life as much as I can to keep the commandments and do the things I should do. I've been blessed, and I know the Lord has taken care of me through the years. I'm thankful for the opportunities I've had of serving and pray I'll be able to take care and remember our Father in Heaven to the end. I enjoyed working in the Temple, that was a great privilege and we were blessed beyond expression.

*3-26-02- Copied from  
"Kathy" M Wright files  
3-26-02 by RLL*